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# Farm Broadcasters Letter



CURRENT SERIAL RECORDS

Letter No. 2299

February 12, 1987

## USSR GRAIN IMPORT EST.

The estimate of USSR grain imports for the 1986/87 marketing year was increased by 2 million tons to 23 million by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. USSR grain buyers continued to actively cover Jan.-June import needs with recent purchases calling for delivery towards the end of this period. Total purchases from all origins are now estimated at around 20 million tons, including 13 million wheat and 7 million coarse grains.

## HARSH WEATHER DAMAGE IN USSR

According to a Feb. 5 article in "Izvestiya," winter crops in the USSR have "perished" on about 9 million hectares (22½ million acres) because of harsh weather conditions. The article did not state what part was accounted for by grains. In a recent report, the U.S. Department of Agriculture estimated the winter grain area sown for the 1987 crop at about 33 million hectares (82 million acres). Typically, non-grain crops amount to about 5 million hectares (12½ million acres).

## SUBSIDIES IN AUSTRALIA

The Australian government is introducing direct producer subsidies for the first time (estimated to be up to \$132 million) to pay wheat farmers for their 1987 crop, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This comes despite earlier denials of reports suggesting that the government may have to introduce subsidies to cover export losses. It appears that sharply falling world wheat prices reduced export sales revenue to levels insufficient to cover the Australian Wheat Board's estimated break-even selling price of around \$98 per metric ton.

## U.S. EXPORT VALUE UP

Agricultural export value during Dec. 1986 totaled \$2 billion 570 million, down \$75 million 500 thousand from Dec. 1985, but up \$54 million from November, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This was the sixth straight month the export value increased. Consequently, U.S. agricultural exports during Oct.-Dec. 1986 that totaled \$7 billion 500 million were down only 3 pct. from the same period a year earlier. The sharpest cumulative year-to-year market declines occurred in wheat and corn. Significant drops also occurred in the exports of peanuts, vegetable oils and tobacco. The biggest export gainers were soybeans, soybean meal, raw cotton, beef, tree nuts, fruit, cattle hides and poultry products.

WORLD WHEAT  
HIGHLIGHTS

The world production of wheat for 1986/87 is estimated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture at a record 527 million 900 thousand tons, up 5 million 400 thousand tons from last month, and up 6 pct. from the 1985/86 harvest. The USSR wheat production is estimated at 92 million 300 thousand tons, up 5 million 300 thousand or 6 pct. from last month and up 18 pct. from last year. Pakistan wheat production is estimated at a record 13 million 900 thousand tons, up 19 pct. from last year. Argentina production is estimated at 9 million tons, down 2 pct. from last month, but up 6 pct. from last year.

WORLD COARSE  
GRAINS  
HIGHLIGHTS

World production of coarse grains for 1986/87 is estimated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture at 835 million 800 thousand tons, down 2 million 200 thousand from last month and 1 pct. from 1985/86. USSR production is estimated at 103.3 million tons, down 4 pct. from last month, but up 3 pct. from last year. E. Europe production is estimated at 73 million 600 thousand tons, up 2 percent from last month and up 8 pct. from last year. Brazil coarse grain production is estimated at a record 24 million 600 thousand tons, up 7 pct. from last month and up 19 pct. from last year.

WORLD OILSEED  
HIGHLIGHTS

The world production of oilseeds for 1986/87 is estimated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture at a record 195 million 900 thousand tons, up less than 1 pct. from last month, but virtually unchanged from last year's output. U.S. production is estimated at 61 million 300 thousand tons, unchanged from last month, but down 6 pct. from last year. Foreign production is estimated at a record 134 million 600 thousand tons, up less than 1 pct. from last month and up 3 pct. from last year.

WORLD SOYBEAN  
PRODUCTION

The world soybean production for 1986/87 is forecast by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to be up about 250,000 tons to 98 million 900 thousand tons. Brazil's production was raised 300,000 tons to 16 million 500 thousand based on prospects for higher yields because of good growing conditions.

WORLD  
SOYBEAN  
EXPORTS

The world soybean exports for 1986/87 were lowered about 670,000 tons this month by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to 26 million 700 thousand tons. A major factor contributing to this reduction is a change in the mix of Soviet soybean/soymeal imports. Soviet soybean imports were lowered 750,000 tons while soybean meal imports were raised 400,000 tons to 1 million tons. S. America and the European Community are expected to be the major sources for Soviet soybean meal imports. Consequently, despite increased year-to-date exports, U.S. soybean exports were lowered about 820,000 tons to 19 million 900 thousand tons.

TELEPHONE FOR  
EXPORT  
ENHANCEMENT

On February 9, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Foreign Agriculture Service started a 24-hour telephone service with daily updates on activity under the Export Enhancement Program. The telephone number is 202/447-2043. The message will be updated daily at 4 p.m. Eastern Standard time.



FROM OUR  
TELEVISION  
SERVICE

WIND DAMAGE IN THE GREAT PLAINS...Wind damaged 1.5 million acres of land in the Great Plains area this winter, a third more acres than at this time last year, and double the 1970-1984 average. Tom George with USDA's Soil Conservation Service, focuses on factors contributing to the increase. DeBoria Janifer interviews. (126)

CROP PRODUCTION ESTIMATES...Wheat exports are expected to be 12 percent greater than last year's totals, and exports of sorghum and barley are forecast to be even higher. USDA economist Sam Evans takes a look at the supply and demand estimates for world agriculture. Vic Powell interviews. (127)

SOVIET GRAIN FORECAST...Recent cold weather in the Soviet Union could have an impact on crop yields in some areas, and it appears to be having an effect on the amount of grain moving into livestock feed. USDA analyst Keith Severin examines the USSR grain situation and outlook. Vic Powell interviews. (128)

ANIMAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS...Tom Poerstel with USDA's Office of Transportation, talks about an international meeting coming up in March to discuss the importance of proper care and treatment of animals when transporting them to various countries. Marlene Stinson interviews. (129)

WHOLESALE MEMBERSHIP CLUBS...USDA economist Judy Putman talks about the growing popularity of wholesale membership clubs - no frill warehouse shopping facilities that offer low price savings to members on a wide range of items. Dave Carter interviews. (130)

FROM OUR RADIO  
SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1550...(Weekly 13½ min documentary) Farmers have been promised "a revolution in agriculture" as a result of biotechnology and genetic engineering, but is that science going to fulfill its promise? Gary Crawford explores the promises and problems of biotechnology.

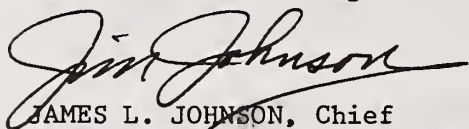
AGRITAPE/FARM PROGRAM REPORT #1539...(Weekly reel of news features) USDA news highlights; Changes in eligibility for conservation reserve; Farm failures; Preventing poison ivy; E.C. hormone ban causes stir.

CONSUMER TIME #1032...(Weekly reel of 2½-3 min features) Cockroaches and allergies; Chewing tobacco; Who's eating out?; The Asian pear; IRA's and the new tax law.

USDA RADIO NEWS SERVICE...Wed, Feb. 18, Agricultural outlook report; Thurs, Feb. 19, World tobacco situation, Export outlook; Fri, Feb. 20, Catfish, Red meat production, Wheat situation; Tues, Feb. 24, Crop and weather update; Wed, Feb. 25, Poultry production report; Thurs, Feb. 26, Vegetable outlook. Dial the USDA National News Line 202-488-8358 or 8359. All material changed at 5 p.m. ET each working day.

OFF MIKE

The USDA sponsored Challenge Forum on biotechnology is now history. As one of the summarizers for the three concurrent sessions in the afternoon of the first day, Keith Kirkpatrick (WHO, Des Moines, IA) did an excellent job. And his crutches didn't hamper his performance in the least. When we asked why the crutches, he explained he broke his heel when he fell from a tree while deer hunting ... Bob Crabtree (KNUJ/KXLP, New Ulm, MN) is the latest farm broadcaster to be saluted for a job well done by the Mid-Am Reporter magazine, Forrest Bradley editor. Bob says his role model was Dean Curtis, now deceased, who was president of NAFB in 1971 and worked at KDHL in Faribault, MN. Bob started his career in farming but, because of a health problem, went back to school to learn more about broadcasting. And the rest is self-evident. Dean would be proud ... We learned, somewhat belatedly that Cletus Paull died Christmas Eve. He had retired from KBUR, Burlington, IA, last July because of poor health. He had suffered a series of strokes. He joined KBUR in 1947. John Wier replaced Cletus as farm broadcaster at the station ... Von Ketelsen is looking for a farm broadcaster's job. He called to report this his media work with the Committee for Agriculture in Bloomington, MN, is being discontinued. If you'd like to talk with Von, his number is 612-854-9005 ... As you know, news is unpredictable. One day it's quiet, another it's jumping. Our USDA Radio crew found it was really jumping earlier this week. By the time the smoke cleared away, Gary, Brenda and George had 11 stories for the news line and had to hold back another 3 because there wasn't room enough on the carts. The next day was back to normal, though.



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